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"Now that this enterprise has been actually started, no effort will be wanting on my part, or that of the Government, to afford it assistance. The explorers will be able to procure from time to time fresh supplies at Burketown, the new settlement recently established on my recommendation at the head of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

"G. F. BOWEN."

It may be seen by passages in the above communication, that the promoters of the Search Expedition believe other results will flow from the exploration, even should it fail in recovering any surviving member, or obtaining further traces of Leichhardt's party. Our geographical knowledge of the interior of the continent cannot fail to be greatly increased by an expedition so well-equipped, and commanded by so able a leader as Mr. Duncan M'Intyre. On this aspect of the question Dr. Mueller thus writes, in a letter dated July 21, 1865, to Sir Charles Darling, Governor of Victoria :—

"Independently of our fulfilling the dictates of gratitude and humanity, incalculable advantages for colonization, industry, and commerce would accrue from a further exploration of this great and solely British continent, over which, unhindered by the native population, the stream of settlement may spread. I see that the thousands perishing annually by cold and famine in overpopulated spots of the mother country, if brought to the unoccupied and everywhere salubrious Australian territory of the British Crown, might live in health and prosperity. I maintain that it has become a point of honour to the million and a half of civilised inhabitants, occupying as yet but little beyond the coast tracts of Australia, to throw open by exploration and by scientific research, for occupation, for industry, and for settled homes, the whole interior of this continent. I perceive that we cannot fix even the lines of the telegraph, which most advantageously are to unite us with the northern hemisphere, and indeed with the world, until we have withdrawn, as Leichhardt intended to have done, the veil from the still so extensively unknown interior. I cannot but contemplate, that of the real wealth of Australia in treasures of copper and gold we cannot form even an approximate estimate, until in many paths the space from coast to coast shall have been traversed."

2. *Foundation of Burketown, on the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria, and extension of the Electric Telegraph in Queensland.*

SIR GEORGE BOWEN, the active and enlightened Governor of Queensland, has transmitted to us, through the Colonial Office, an account of the establishment of a township near the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria, being the first settlement made in this fertile and promising region. It is situated at the head of the navigation of the Albert River, and has been named Burketown, in honour of the gallant but unfortunate explorer who lost his life in recrossing the continent of Australia in 1861. The district of Burke is being rapidly occupied by pastoral settlers, who drive their stock overland from the older districts of this colony, but who will receive their supplies chiefly by ships sent round Cape York to the new port of Burketown.

With regard to the extension of the electric telegraph in Australia, Sir George Bowen announces that the Legislature of Queensland will be ready to carry the electric wire at its own cost to Burketown, if that point be chosen as the connecting-link of the Australian wires with the submarine line to Asia and Europe, or to meet, at any point that may be arranged, a line coming from the new settlement in Adam Bay, if the latter terminus be preferred. The

telegraphic system of Southern Queensland was already being extended to Port Denison (20° s. lat.), and Mr. Cracknell, the superintendent, saw no difficulty in carrying it thence to the mouth of the Albert River, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, as sufficient suitable timber is at hand throughout the whole route.

3.—*Overland Journey from Rockhampton to Port Denison, viâ Bowen Downs and the Salt Lake.* By W. LANDSBOROUGH, Esq.

(Communicated by the GOVERNOR of QUEENSLAND.)

IN the end of last year and beginning of this year (1865) I made an excursion, 900 miles in extent, from Rockhampton to Port Denison, *viâ* the Mitchell District. My route lay chiefly over a tract of country which but a few years ago—that is, at the period of the Separation of Queensland from New South Wales—was an uninhabited waste. With the view of furnishing a sample of colonial progress, I purpose noting down a few particulars of my journey.

Rockhampton, my point of departure, has risen in eight years to the position of a thriving town of five or six thousand inhabitants. It is situated on the Fitzroy River, which is formed by a junction of the Dawson and Mackenzie. This town is the outlet for the wool produce of the Comet, Peak Downs, and Barcoo. Fortunate in having the companionship of a few friends, I was doubly so in having secured the services of a black boy, who proved very useful in mustering the horses every morning, saddling and packing them, fetching water, lighting fires, and washing our clothes. For 80 miles to the westward of Rockhampton, the road was thronged with travellers and drays; the townward ones being laden with wool, the return ones with station supplies. I observed that horse teams were becoming more common, probably on account of the prevalence of pleuro-pneumonia, which has lately proved so fatal to cattle. Along this route, as far as the Dawson, every facility in the shape of hotels and good roads is presented to the traveller. The Dawson is easily fordable except during floods, when there is the convenience of a punt. On the further bank, the road branches off into two, *viz.*, the Peak Downs and the Barcoo roads. Following the latter, I met with no hotel for a distance of 133 miles, but there is the usual resource of sheep stations within easy riding distance of each other.

The line now crossed is the watershed of the Comet and the Nogoa Rivers of the Leichhardt District,—perhaps the finest grazing country of North Queensland. At Mantuan Downs, about 325 miles from Rockhampton, I diverged to the right from the Barcoo road, following a by-path called Hodson's Track, which leads to Arramac Creek, a feeder of the Thomson. The more common route, by the Barcoo, is 100 miles longer, but possesses the advantage of avoiding an extensive tract of poor country stretching northwards. This is variously styled the "tridia," the "poison" country and the "Desert." The poison plant (*Gastrolobium grandiflorum*) abounds on its sandstone ranges, and Mr. Hodson, who first took sheep over it, lost nearly a thousand at one place. A ride of 16 miles brought us to Fairview Station, on Balmy Downs—one of the best sheep-walks of the Leichhardt District, which comprises the watershed of the Comet, Nogoa, and Isaac Rivers; and next day's ride of 35 miles lay over the Belyando watershed of the Kennedy District.

Having enjoyed the hospitalities of the proprietors of Alpha Station, we prepared to cross the Desert alluded to. The country being uninhabited, except by wild blacks, for a distance of 165 miles, we bought a good supply of provisions, and put our firearms, for the first time, in order. A ride of 10 miles took us over the Belyando Range into the Mitchell District, and we continued our journey 20 miles further before encamping. Our second day's journey was